

sentence of the letter to McCain. On the one hand, Babbitt states that the letter was “precise and correct”;⁸⁴⁴ on the other hand, in statements attributed to him, Babbitt said that the letter “was carelessly written.”⁸⁴⁵

⁸⁴³(...continued)

. . . There must have been a discussion of some kind somewhere in the process for me to make the first important point in the letter, which was that I never discussed the matter with Ickes. I mean, you know, I had to make that point, and the second point that I do not agree with the Eckstein assertion with respect to the conversation.

Id. at 213-14.

⁸⁴⁴Babbitt Senate Test. at 264.

⁸⁴⁵*Secretary Denies Wrongdoing in Decision on Indian Casino; But Admits Some ‘Dumb’ Moves*, Arizona Republic, Dec. 14, 1997, at A23 (interview with Babbitt). Babbitt testified more recently as follows:

All I would emphasize here is that the Eckstein conversation didn’t seem very important to me when I wrote this letter to Senator McCain. You know, you can parse it a hundred ways after the fact.

Im writing to McCain saying – his concern is, you know, Ickes and whether or not there’s White House involvement, and there clearly wasn’t. There was no communication with Ickes.

And I got that down because that’s what I was really focusing on.

So I walked past the Eckstein thing by saying I dispute his – what’s the language – I just left it hanging. I shouldn’t have done that, but I did.

Babbitt G.J. Test., July 7, 1999, at 213-14.